

Education Cabinet

Kentucky offers industry partnership grants totaling \$500,000 to encourage future growth industries

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Contact Information: Cathy Lindsey
(502) 564-9908
cathy.lindsey@ky.gov

The Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (KWIB) is now accepting proposals for grants ranging from \$5,000 - \$65,000 each to create industry partnerships that will encourage employers to build a talent pipeline to support five industry sectors that the state has targeted. Applications addressing regional targeted sectors will also be considered. The deadline for the request for proposals (RFP) is Oct. 10, 2011.

"We need applicants who are interested in developing industry partnerships that can connect and meet the needs of both workers and businesses in the state's emerging growth sectors," said Beth Brinly, commissioner of the Department of Workforce Investment in the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet.

A total of \$500,000 in grants will be awarded to industry partnerships that are comprised of a consortium of employer representatives, and where possible, employee associations, organized labor and representatives from the workforce. Information from the industry partnerships will be used to adjust education and training investments to meet the needs of sectors in Kentucky that have been identified through a study as growth industries.

KWIB recently announced the results of that study in a report entitled "Kentucky's Target Industry Sectors." The following five industries were identified in the report as growth sectors.

Automobile and Aircraft Manufacturing focuses on industries engaged in the development of automotive and aircraft assembly, prototype development, conversion and overhauling/rebuilding. Industries that manufacture automobile and aircraft components are also categorized in this sector.

Transportation, Distribution and Logistics focuses on the movement and storage of goods and support activities related to different modes of transportation. Specific modes of transportation include water, rail, road and air.

Business Services and Research and Development consists of industries that specialize in performing professional, scientific and technical services for others, including research and development.

Health Care/Social Assistance involves industries focused on the provision of health care and social assistance to individuals and delivered by health or social service practitioners.

Energy Creation/Transmission focuses on sectors engaged in the creation of energy (e.g., coal, gas, wind, etc.), transmission of energy (power lines, pipe, etc.) and support the creation and distribution of energy.

Key data elements considered when defining Kentucky's sector strategy approach included: historical growth, future projection, industry concentration, industry competitiveness, export orientation, job multiplier effects, industry average wage and workforce compatibility. The study was conducted by Maher & Maher, an international consulting firm, in partnership with Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc. (EMSI). To view the entire report, go to www.educationcabinet.ky.gov.

In addition to identifying target sectors statewide, workforce partners representing higher education, industry, economic development and community-based organizations are working together to determine what job sectors are emerging in different regions of the state and what resources need to be in place to better prepare local workforces to take advantage of those jobs.

"The next important step in this process is to garner the support and expertise of Kentucky's employers and workforce representatives through industry partnerships," said Brinly. "Through these industry partnerships, we want Kentucky businesses to tell us what skills they need in employees. We also want partners to give us input on how to meet the career goals of workers and the economic development objectives of the various regions of the state."

The long-term goal of industry partnerships is to create an infrastructure that will provide employer-led training and education that enhances the skills of incumbent workers and develop career pathways for the emerging workforce. In turn, it will raise earnings for workers and revenues of businesses by increasing productivity and the quality of services within Kentucky.

For guidelines and to apply for the Industry Partnerships RFP, go to www.kwib.ky.gov. For further information, contact Pat Dudgeon at (502) 782-3032 or PatriciaO.Dudgeon@ky.gov.

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